



ALL NEW



NO. 4
AUG.
00028
74/CDC

UK
6p

E-MAN

CITY IN THE SAND!



00028

FROM THE YEAR 3100 B.C. TO 642 A.D., THERE EXISTED A CULTURE ALONG THE NILE RIVER THAT HAS OFTEN BEEN REFERRED TO AS THE "INFANT OF CIVILIZATION." THIS WAS ANCIENT EGYPT... BUT WHERE DID THE EGYPTIANS LEARN THE ARTS, CRAFTS, AND SCIENCES WHICH INFLUENCE EVEN TODAY'S CIVILIZATIONS? DID THEY, AS THE HISTORIANS TELL US, DEVELOP THESE THEMSELVES... OR WAS THEIR KNOWLEDGE A GIFT FROM THE STARS?

CITY IN THE SAND

EDITOR -
GEORGE WILDMAN
SCRIPT -
NICOLA CUTI
ART -
JOE STATON

THE CAMEL CLUB IN EGYPT...

E-MAN

IT IS RARE TO SEE A NON-EGYPTIAN PERFORM OUR "TAXIM" SO WELL.

WHAT FORM! WHAT RHYTHM!

HOO-RAY NOVA KANE!

NOVA...

THE DANCE IS WELL-RECEIVED, BUT AFTER SIX ENCORES, NOVA RETIRES DESPITE THE ENCOURAGING APPLAUSE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PERFORMANCE, MISS KANE. BY THE WAY... THERE IS A MAN WAITING FOR YOU OUTSIDE.

OH YES, I'M EXPECTING HIM.

EGYPTIAN DAYS ARE HOT
AND BUSTLING, BUT THE
NIGHTS ARE COOL AND
DANGEROUS...

MISS KANE,
I'M OVER
HERE.

MR. BOGNI,
I...
OMILORD!

IT IS I, KASH
BOGNI, NOT KING
TUT'S MUMMY.
THERE ARE THOSE
WHO DO NOT
WISH YOU TO
HAVE THE MAP
TO THE LOST
CITY...
AND THEY DID
THIS TO ME.

BUT WHY?
BOTH OF OUR
GOVERNMENTS
WERE
ENTHUSIASTIC
ABOUT MY
EXPEDITION.

IT IS NOT JUST
THE CITY, BUT WHAT
LIES IN THE CENTER
OF...

CAAAAAAAAAA

MR.
BOGNI !!!

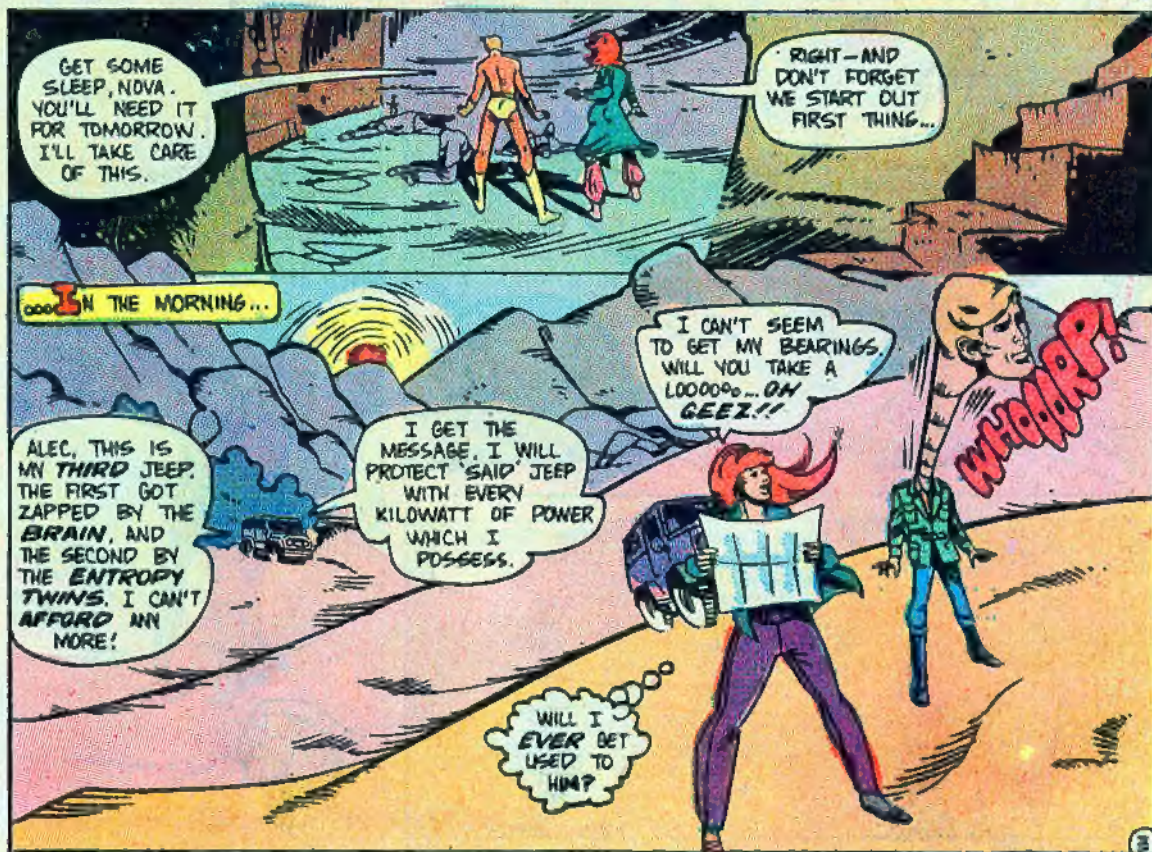
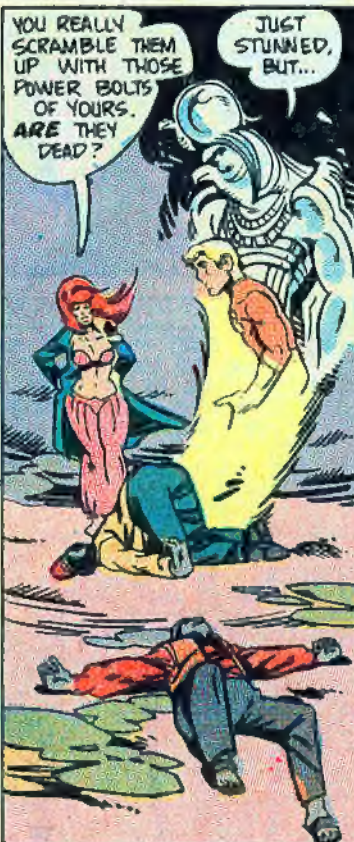
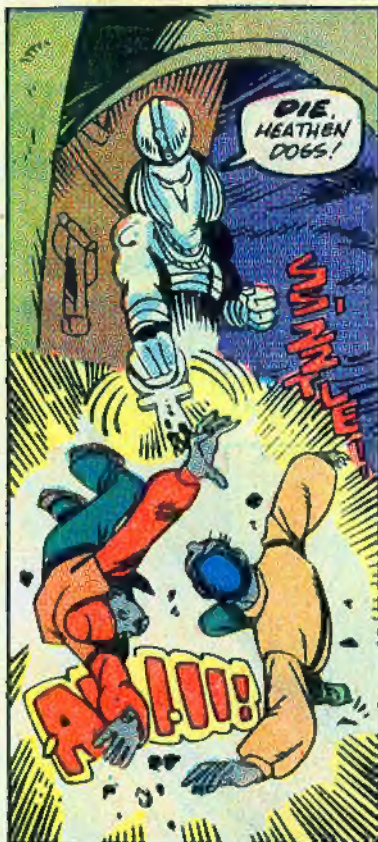
DO NOT RUN, WOMAN,
OR WE WILL KILL
YOU!

GIVE US
THE
MAP.

**E-MAN
!!!**

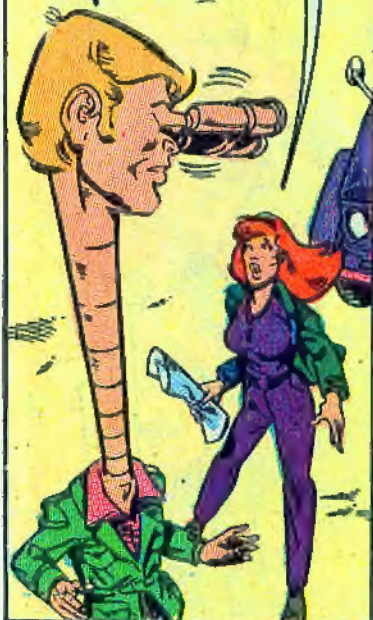
WHO DARES TO
MOLEST A PROTECTORATE
OF THE GREAT GOD
RA??

KEROOM



I CAN SEE AN OLD CITY ABOUT THREE MILES NORTH-WEST OF HERE. COULD THAT BE IT?

THAT **MUST** BE THE ONE! THERE'S NONE OTHER LISTED ON THE MAP!



THE CITY WAS EASY ENOUGH TO FIND. **WHY** WAS A MAN **KILLED** IN ORDER TO KEEP ITS LOCATION A SECRET?

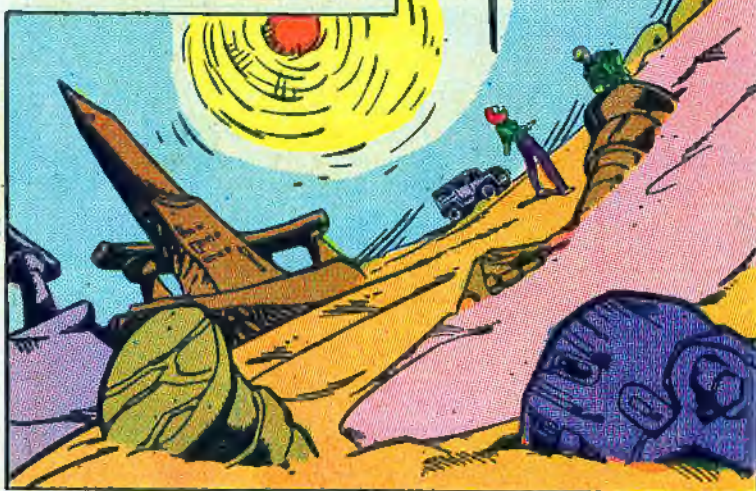
THERE'S SOMETHING **VALUABLE** OR **IMPORTANT** IN THE **CENTER**. **BOGNI** WAS ABLE TO TELL ME AT LEAST **THAT** MUCH BEFORE... **FFFFT!!**



WITH A QUIET REVERENCE, ALEC AND NOVA DROVE UP TO THE LONELY SIGHT OF THE BONES OF A CITY LYING IN THE SAND. THIS CARCASS HAD BEEN PICKED CLEAN...FOR EVEN THE DESERT HAD ABANDONED IT.

WASN'T SHE A **BEAUTY**?

IT MAKES ME SHUDDER. WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PEOPLE... AND **WHY**?



YOU KNOW, IT'S JUST THE TWO OF US ALONE IN THE MIDDLE OF... ARE YOU **LISTENING** TO ME?

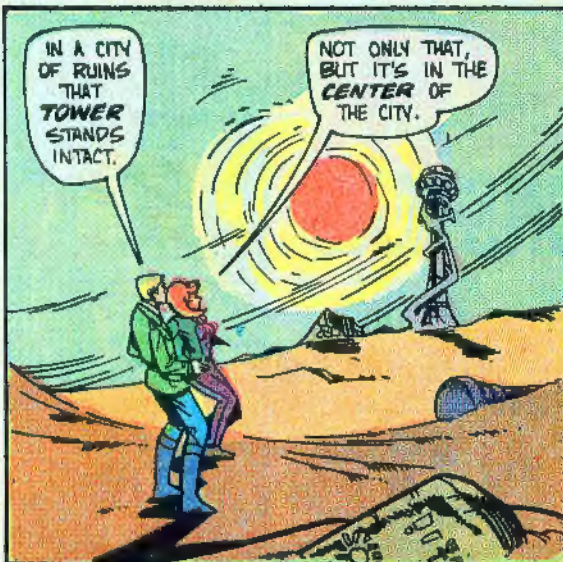
THAT **TOWER**, NOVA, LOOK AT IT.

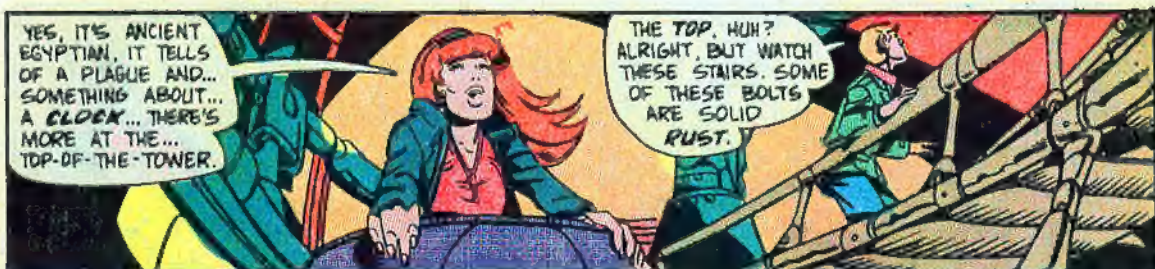


WHEN I WAS WANDERING THROUGH THE UNIVERSE IN MY ENERGY FORM, LOOKING FOR INTELLIGENT LIFE, I FOUND TOO MANY OF THESE **SKELETONS**. I KEPT THINKING "WHY COULDN'T I HAVE ARRIVED JUST A BIT **EARLIER**."

THEN YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN TOO LATE FOR ME, **HANDSOME**.







YES, IT'S ANCIENT EGYPTIAN. IT TELLS OF A PLAGUE AND... SOMETHING ABOUT... A **CLOCK**... THERE'S MORE AT THE... TOP-OF-THE-TOWER.

THE TOP. HUH? ALRIGHT, BUT WATCH THESE STAIRS. SOME OF THESE BOLTS ARE SOLID RUST.



ALEC!

HANG ON, NOVA!

INSTINCTIVELY, E-MAN TRANSFORMS HIS MATERIAL STATE FROM THE FLESH OF ALEC TRONN TO THE HARD MATTER OF THE METALLIC STAIRCASE.



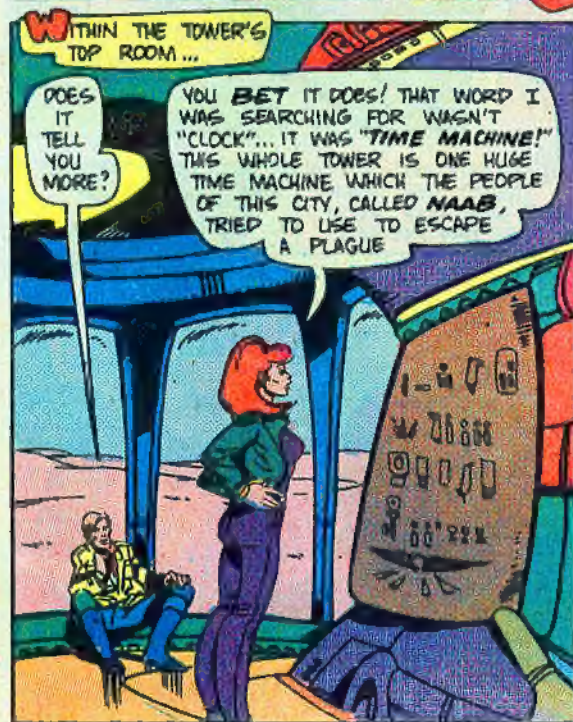
FAR OUT!



I'M NOT STANDING ON YOUR HEAD, AM I?

THAT'S THE LAST STEP.

I'M GLAD SHE'S NOT WEARING HIGH HEELS.



WITHIN THE TOWER'S TOP ROOM...

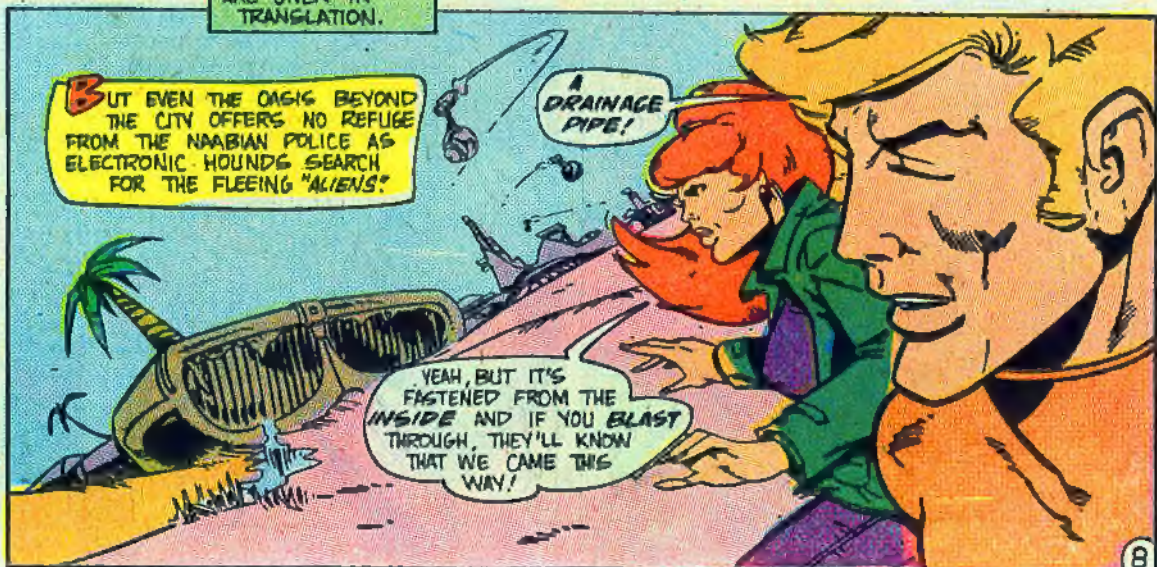
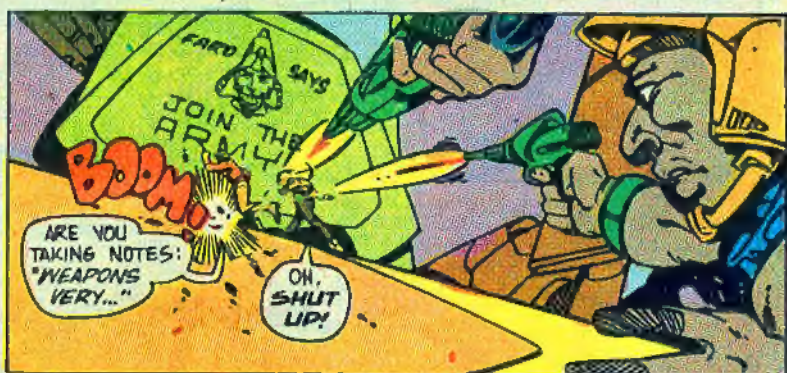
DOES IT TELL YOU MORE?

YOU BET IT DOES! THAT WORD I WAS SEARCHING FOR WASN'T "CLOCK"... IT WAS "TIME MACHINE!" THIS WHOLE TOWER IS ONE HUGE TIME MACHINE WHICH THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY, CALLED NAAB, TRIED TO USE TO ESCAPE A PLAGUE



THE TRAGEDY WAS THAT THEY COULDN'T GATHER THE POWER NECESSARY TO RUN THE MACHINE AND ALL THEIR TECHNOLOGY WENT TO DUST.

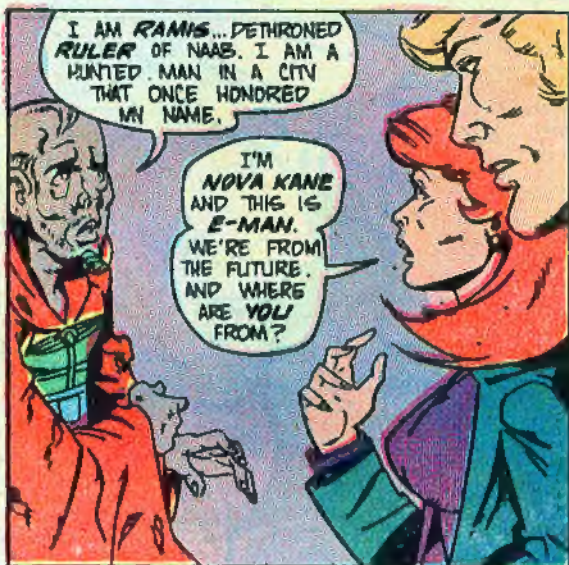
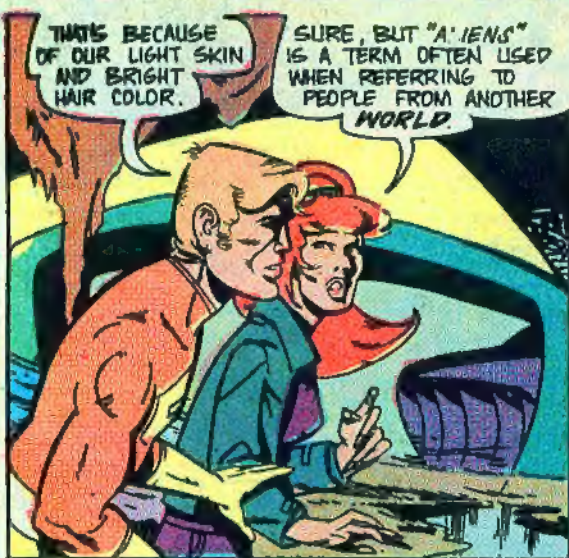
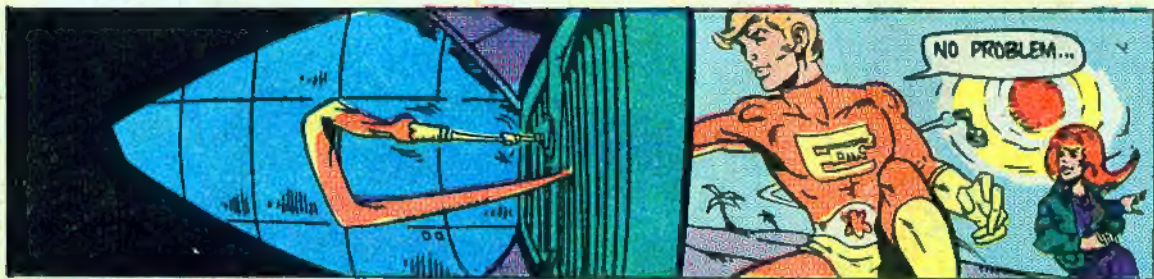
POWER! POWER IS MY LIFE'S BLOOD! WHY DON'T YOU RUN THE MACHINE?!

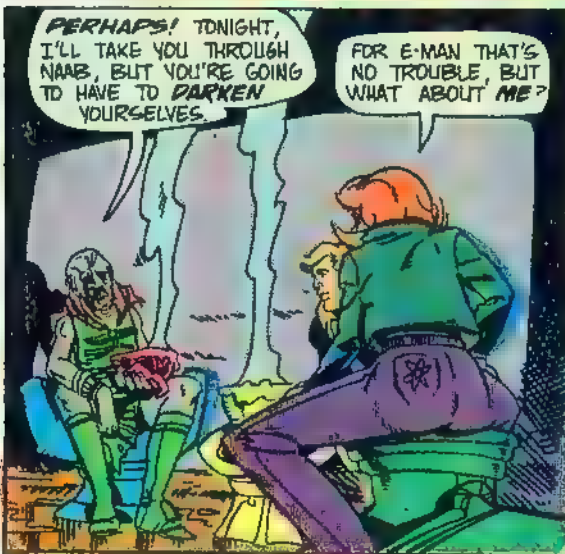
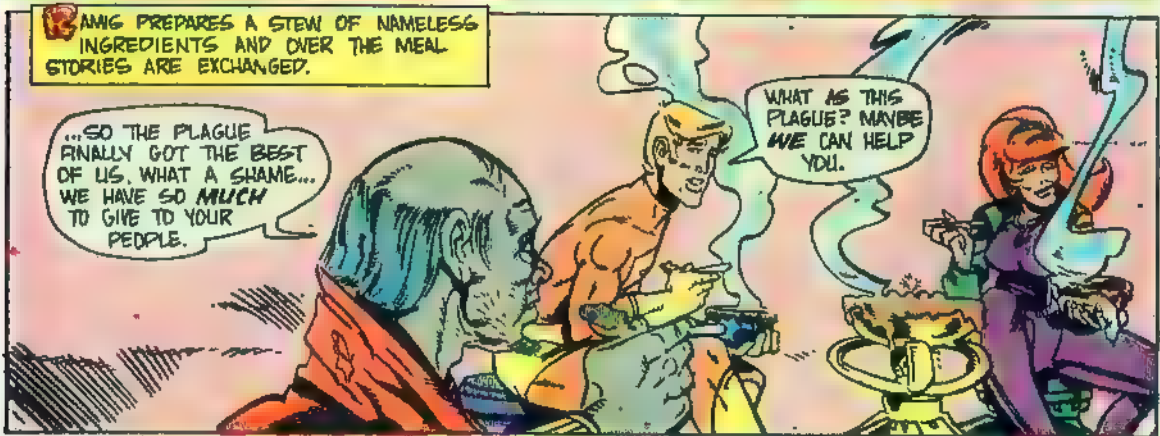
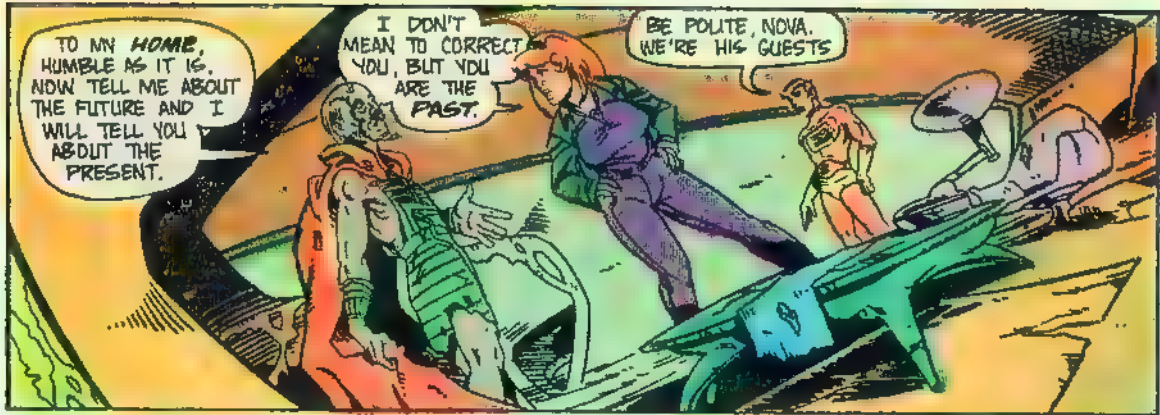


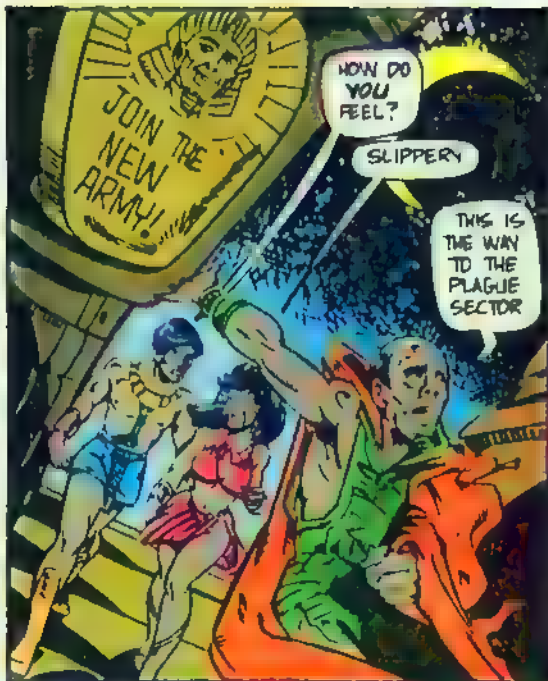
EDITOR'S NOTE: FOR THE BENEFIT OF THOSE OF OUR READERS WHO NEGLECTED TO ENROLL IN BEGINNING HIEROGLYPHICS, SOME INSCRIPTIONS AND DIALOGUE ARE GIVEN IN TRANSLATION.

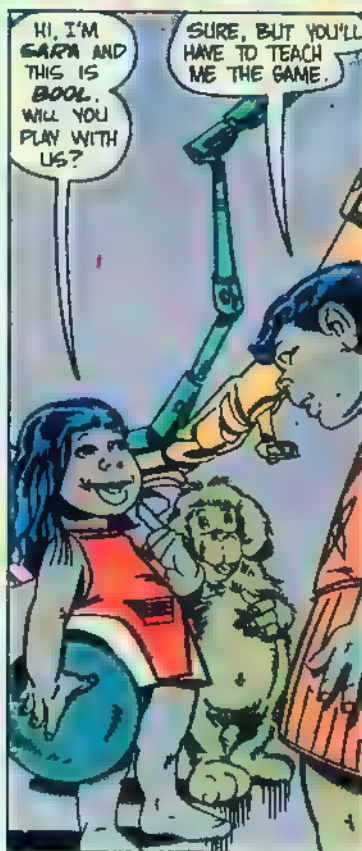
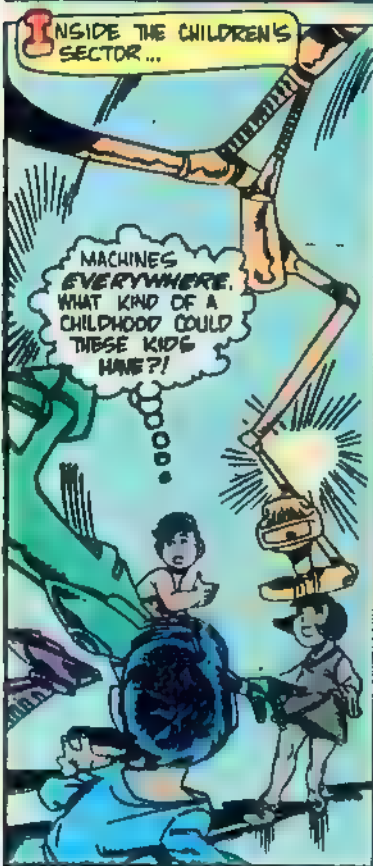
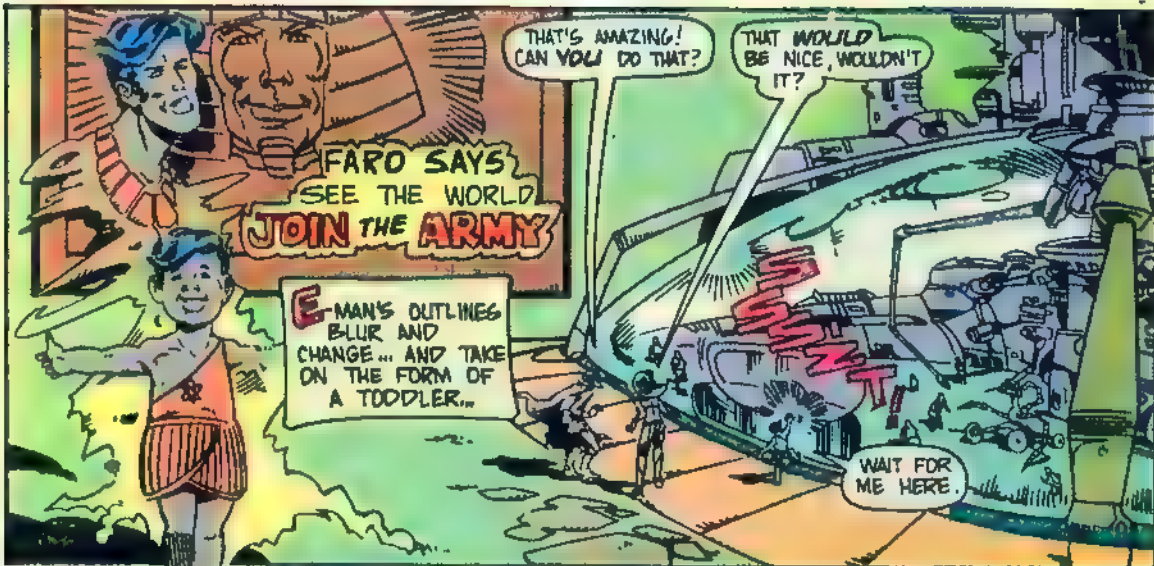
BUT EVEN THE OASIS BEYOND THE CITY OFFERS NO REFUGE FROM THE NAABIAN POLICE AS ELECTRONIC HOUNDS SEARCH FOR THE FLEEING "ALIENS."

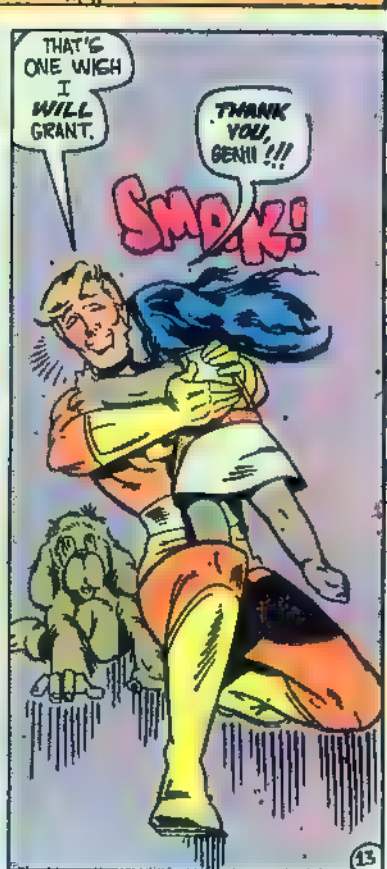
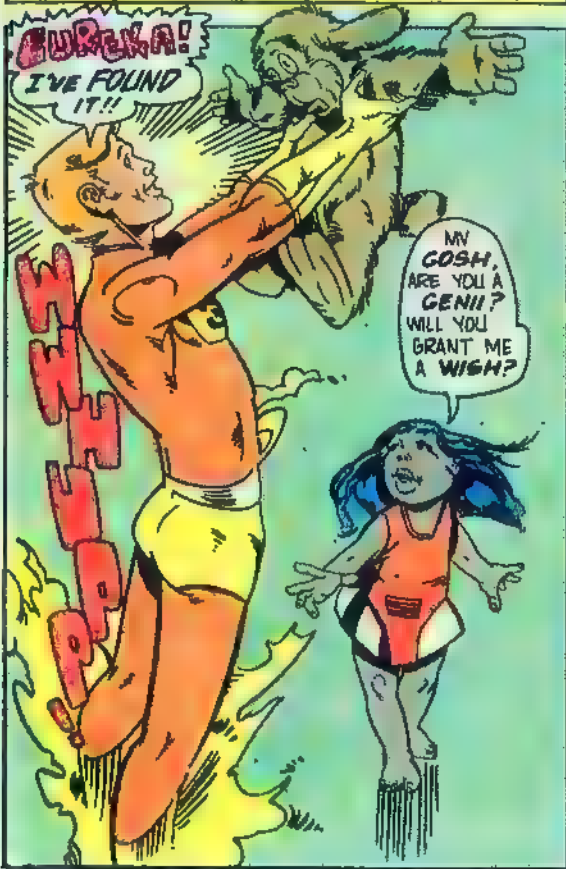
YEAH, BUT IT'S FASTENED FROM THE INSIDE AND IF YOU BLAST THROUGH, THEY'LL KNOW THAT WE CAME THIS WAY!



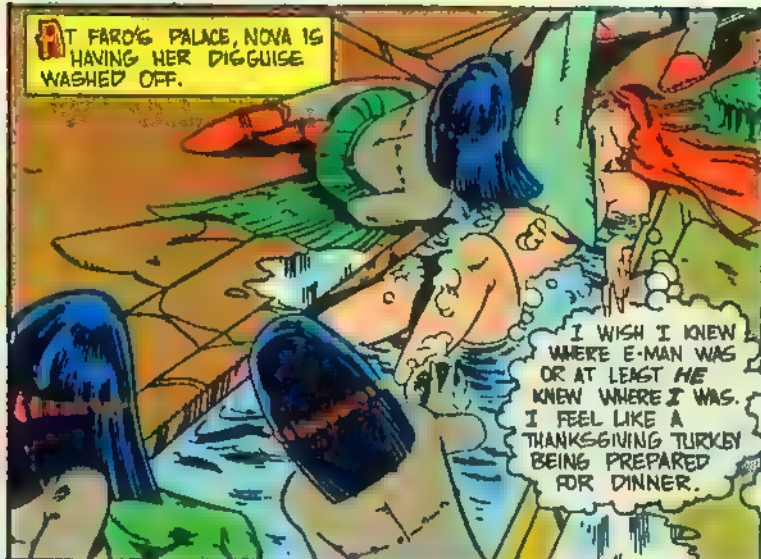








AT FARO'S PALACE, NOVA IS HAVING HER DISGUISE WASHED OFF.



I WISH I KNEW WHERE E-MAN WAS OR AT LEAST HE KNEW WHERE I WAS. I FEEL LIKE A THANKSGIVING TURKEY BEING PREPARED FOR DINNER.

BASIC BLACK! EITHER I'M HEADED FOR A COCKTAIL PARTY OR AN EXECUTION!



I GUESS THIS IS IT, RAMIS.

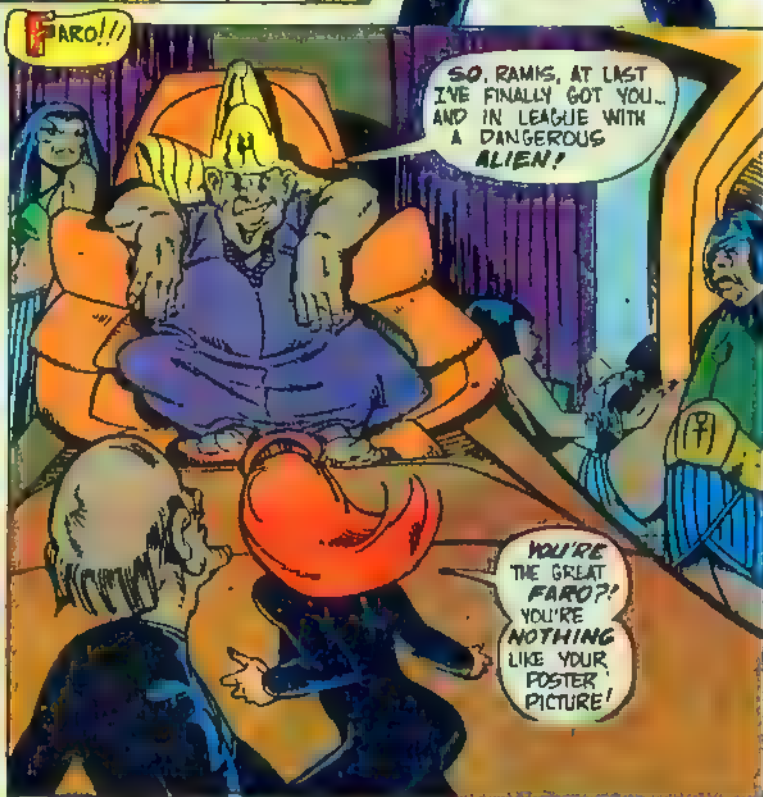
I'M AFRAID SO. DON'T EXPECT MERCY FROM FARO.



FARO!!!

SO, RAMIS, AT LAST I'VE FINALLY GOT YOU... AND IN LEAGUE WITH A DANGEROUS ALIEN!

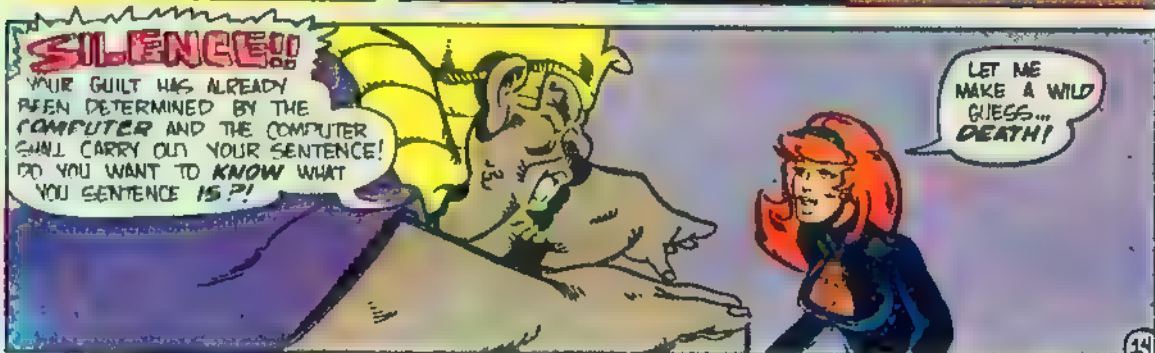
YOU'RE THE GREAT FARO?! YOU'RE NOTHING LIKE YOUR POSTER PICTURE!



SILENCE!!

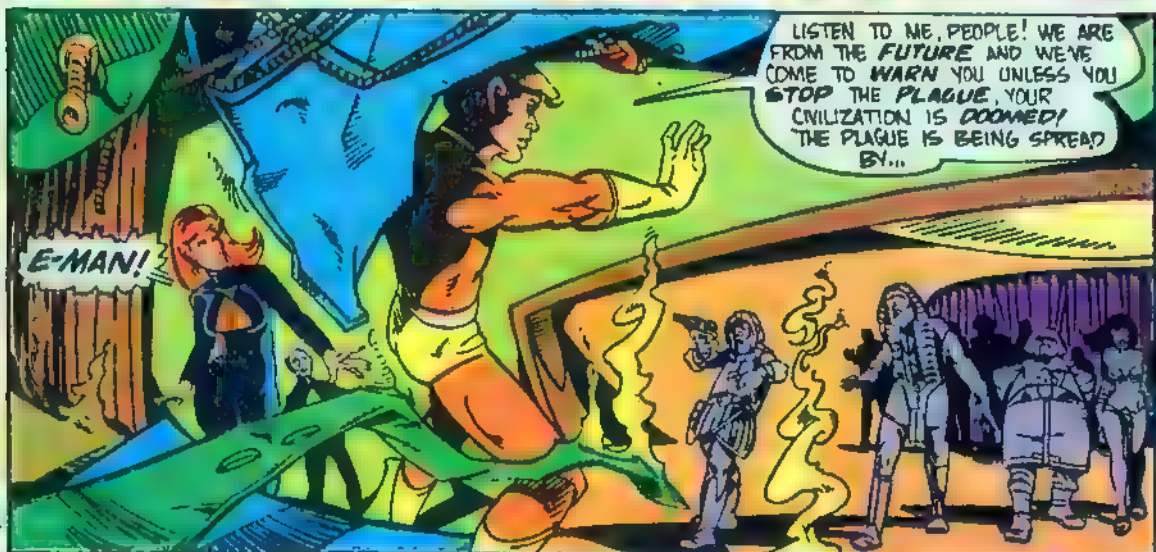
YOUR GUILT HAS ALREADY BEEN DETERMINED BY THE COMPUTER AND THE COMPUTER SHALL CARRY OUT YOUR SENTENCE! DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOUR SENTENCE IS P!

LET ME MAKE A WILD GUESS... DEATH!





AS YOU HAVE SPOKEN!!
TAKE THEM TO THE COMPUTER!!



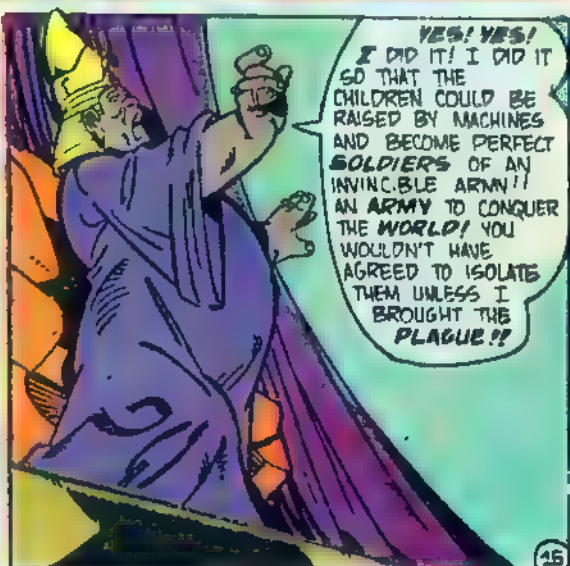
LISTEN TO ME, PEOPLE! WE ARE
FROM THE FUTURE AND WE'VE
COME TO WARN YOU UNLESS YOU
STOP THE PLAGUE, YOUR
CIVILIZATION IS DOOMED!
THE PLAGUE IS BEING SPREAD
BY...

E-MAN!



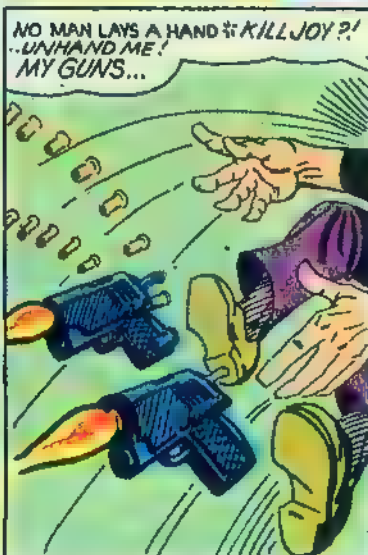
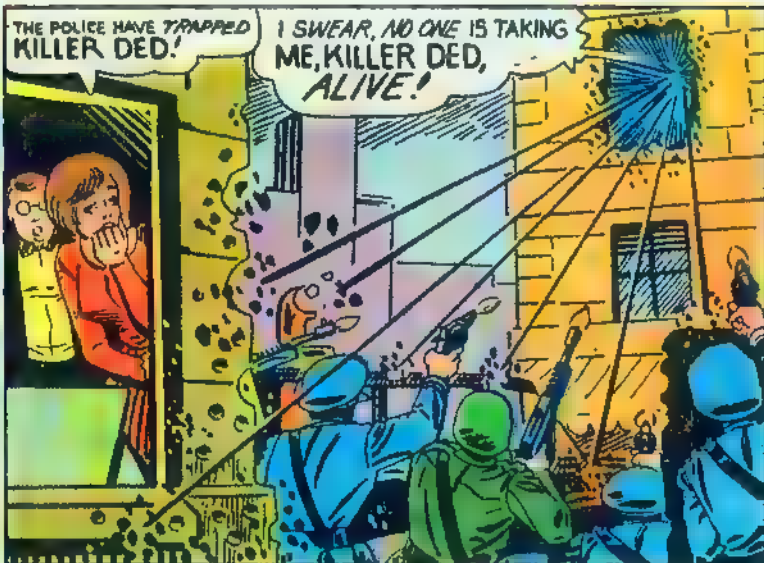
THESE!
THE FLEAS
ON YOUR
CHILDREN'S
PETS!

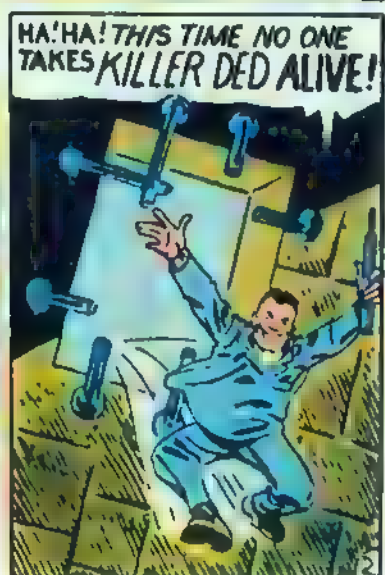
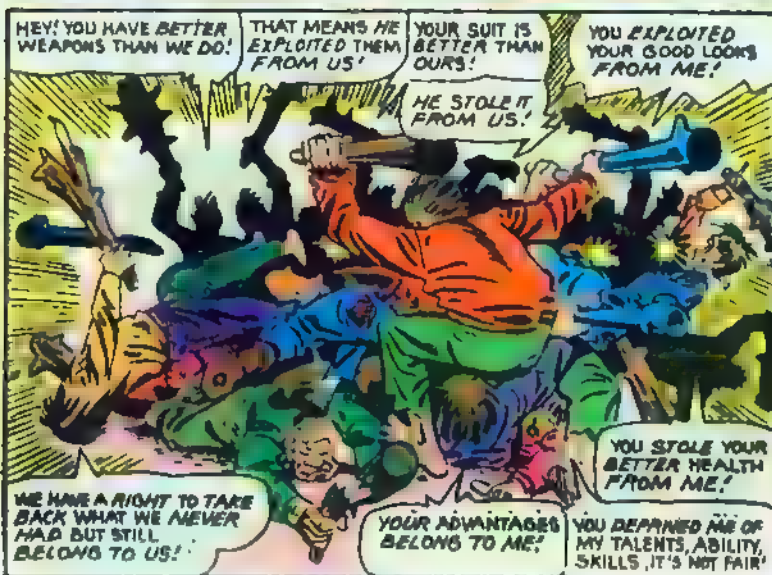
FARO IS
THE ONE WHO
INSISTED
ON YOUR
CHILDREN
HAVING THEM!
YOU ALL
KNOW
THAT!!



YES! YES!
I DID IT! I DID IT!
SO THAT THE
CHILDREN COULD BE
RAISED BY MACHINES
AND BECOME PERFECT
SOLDIERS OF AN
INVINCIBLE ARMY!!
AN ARMY TO CONQUER
THE WORLD! YOU
WOULDN'T HAVE
AGREED TO ISOLATE
THEM UNLESS I
BROUGHT THE
PLAGUE!!







S.S. SNAKE IN GRASS? JEWELRY? I'M PRE-JUDICE, I DON'T DO BUSINESS WITH CROOKS!

IT'S S.S. S. SNAKE! YOU BIGOT, IT'S AGAINST THE LAW TO DISCRIMINATE! ME, I'LL ROB ANYONE! I'LL MAKE IT LEGAL, I'LL GIVE YOU MY PERSONAL I.O.U.!



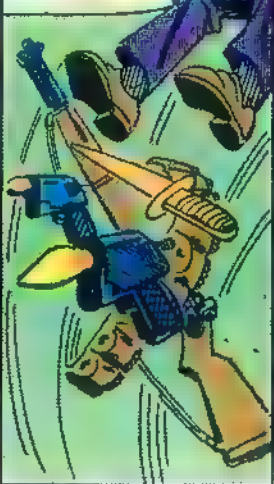
OH, HAPPY DAY! HA! HA! KILLJOY FAILED! HA! HA! HA! SNAKE ESCAPED!



NOW I'LL HAVE MY WAY! TAKE KILLER DEAD OR NOT AT ALL!

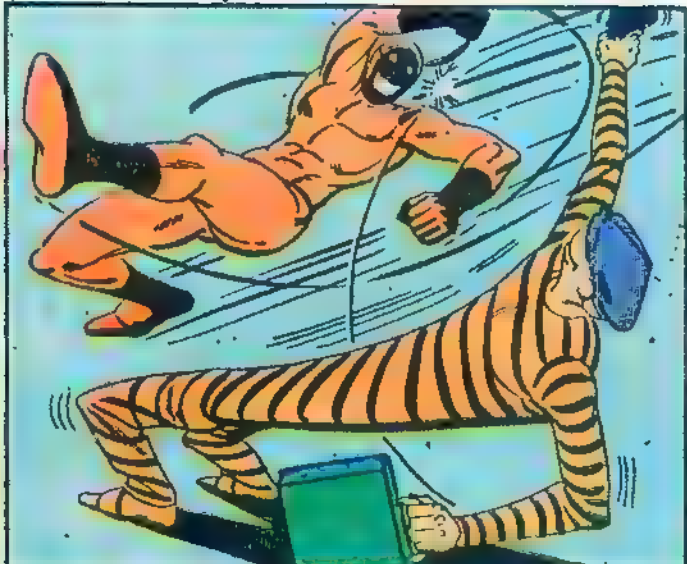


...WHA.. OH, NO! KILL*



JOY! WAH! I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO BE TAKEN ALIVE!





IT'S A 'CRIME' ARRESTING AN HONEST MAN FOR BEING CAUGHT EXERCISING HIS FREEDOM TO TAKE ANOTHER'S PROPERTY: NO ONE HAS A RIGHT TO OWN PROPERTY - ANYTHING! EVERYTHING BELONGS TO EVERYBODY!



EVERY DECENT MAN CAN SEE HE IS BEING FRAMED, FORCED TO ACT THAT WAY BECAUSE OF HIS ENVIRONMENT! HE IS NOT TO BLAME, BUT EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE ELSE IS!

IT IS NOT WHAT A MAN DOES THAT COUNTS! HE HAS TO BE JUDGED BY THE FACT NO ONE CAN BE PERFECTLY GOOD! EVEN THE INNOCENT ARE NOT ALL INNOCENT! HOW CAN THE GUILTY BE ALL GUILTY?



I WAS FORCED TO BE BAD! SOB!

IT IS DISHONEST TO EXPECT A MAN TO BE HONEST, UNJUST TO DEMAND JUSTICE, EVIL TO WANT THE GOOD! BUT THE TRULY HONEST, JUST, GOOD, HUMAN MAN BLAMES NONE, FORGIVES ALL AND ONLY EXPECTS MORE OR LESS OF OTHERS!



MY FEELING, EXACTLY! MY WHIM TELLS ME THE REAL TRUTH! NO ONE CAN HELP WHAT HE DOES OR IS!



WHAT DEPTH OF UNDERSTANDING! YOU, HONORABLE SIR, ARE A SHINING EXAMPLE OF WHAT ALL MEN MUST STRIVE TO BECOME!

THE GUILTY ARE INNOCENT
THE UNEARNED IS THE DESERVING!
THE HONEST ARE TROUBLE MAKERS!
JUSTICE IS UNFAIR!

MERCY IS HIGHER JUSTICE
THE INNOCENT ARE SELFISH
REASON IS ILLOGICAL!
TRUTH IS OPPRESSIVE!



YOU ARE PURE NOBLE UPLIFTING SPIRIT! I'M MR. HART!

YOU ARE INSPIRATIONAL WISDOM! I'M MR. SOLE!

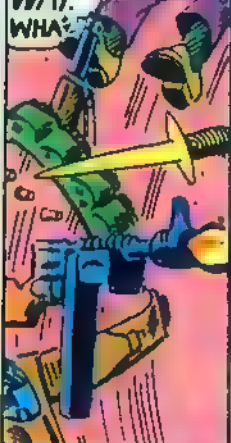


WITHOUT HEART AND SOUL A MAN IS A MIND GUIDING A BODY, REASON CONTROLLING ACTION! HOW INHUMAN!

THIS TIME, KILLER DED WON'T BE TAKEN ALIVE!



THIS TIME IT'S MY WAY! WHA!

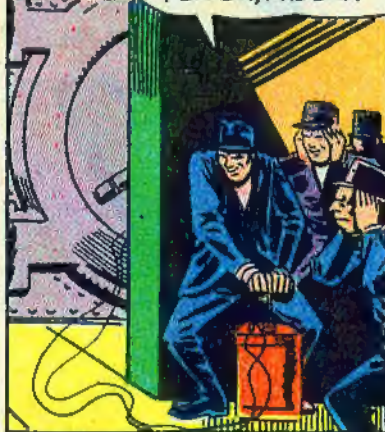


NOT AGAIN!

WHA! KILL JOY IS TO BLAME! HE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE WHAT HE IS, DO WHAT HE DOES! HE COULD HELP IT! WE'LL NEVER FORGIVE HIM! BUT KILLER DED CAN'T HELP BEING WHAT HE IS! SOB! WHA!



NOBODY IS PERFECT, EVEN KILLJOY FAILED. SO IF WE CAN'T BE PERFECT IT IS OKAY TO BE IMPERFECT! BUT WE CAN NEVER BE PERFECTLY BAD, RIGHT? THERE'S ALWAYS SOME GOOD IN US! ONLY EXTREMIST WHO TRY TO BE CONSISTENT, TO BE PERFECT, ARE BAD!

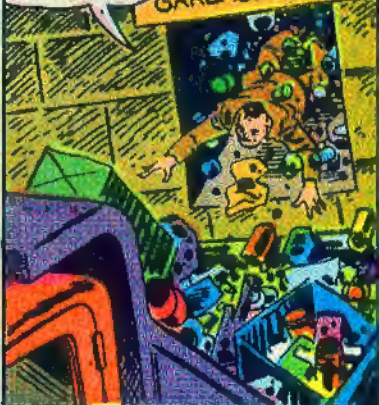


WAH! IT'S NOT FAIR! HE IS PICKING ON US BECAUSE WE'RE IMPERFECTLY GOOD, BECAUSE WE'RE NOT EXTREMIST! IT'S ALRIGHT TO BE IMPERFECTLY BAD! WAH!



THIS TIME, KILLER DED GETS TAKEN DEAD!

GARBAGE SHUTE



YES MR. HART, JUSTICE IS SO UNJUST! WHY MUST 2+2 ALWAYS = 4?!

TRUE, MR. SOLE, WITH MERCY, 2+2 COULD = ANYTHING ANYONE WANTS IT TO BE! THAT'S FAIR!



THIS WAY WITH THE JEWEL OF JEWELS!

THE JEWEL OF JEWELS IS SAFE IN THIS SAFE! ONLY SIR CEDRIC KNOWS THE COMBINATION!

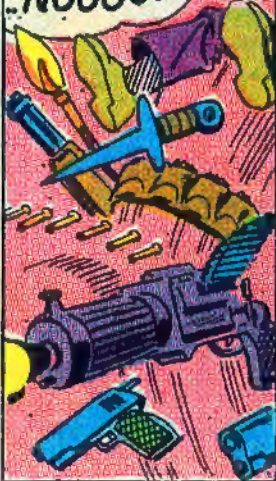
I DO!!



THIS TIME... MY WAY.. DEAD!



THIS TIME... NOOOOO

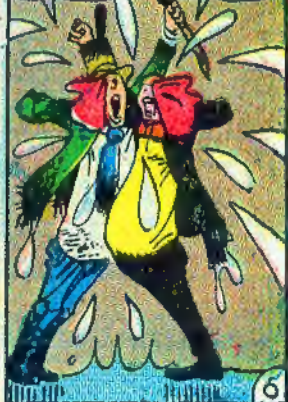


WAH! WHY CAN'T I HAVE MY WAY.. BE TAKEN DEAD!

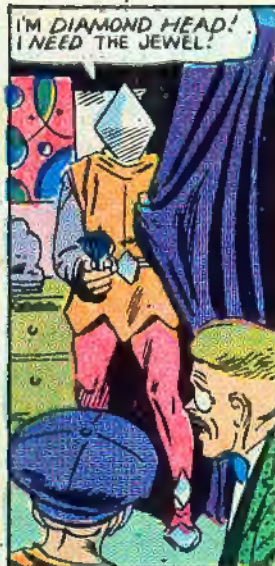


WAH! WHY DOES KILLJOY INTERFERE WITH AN INNOCENT MAN'S PURSUITS, DENY HIS WISHES AND SPOIL HIS HAPPINESS. POOR INNOCENT KILLER! MY SOUL IS CRUSHED, MR. HART!

MY HEART IS BREAKING, MR. SOLE!



CONTINUED AFTER FOLLOWING PAGE





8 END

E-Man!

"...THE SF COMIC BOOK OF THE FUTURE."

The following letter was first printed in "Fantastic Science Fiction & Fantasy Stories" (March 1974) and excerpts are reprinted here with the permission of Ted White, Editor of "Fantastic", and Frank J. Hayes, III. "Fantastic" is an adult science fiction magazine NOT a comic book which may help to explain some of the comments in the letter.

Ted —

Would anyone feel a compulsion to tear me into little bits if I admitted to liking a small piece of indescribably funny comic-book "sf" called E-Man?

At first glance, E-Man appears to be one of the nameless hordes. The plot is clinched and comic-booky. After a nova, a part of the exploded star is endowed with intelligence. It drifts, searching for some other form of intelligent life, until it comes across a typical alien menace from Alpha Centauri, which wants to test a powerful new weapon on Pluto. (Why the alien shies away from Earth, where all the other comic-book menaces seem to be attracted, is a bit unclear.)

The "Intelligent energy" is confused by the alien's robot crew), so he/it transforms him/itself into matter, duplicating one of the robots. (Fortunately, he is not yet aware that $E=mc^2$ would limit his mass to a very low amount.) The extra weight on board confuses the alien (apparently a giant brain under glass), who helplessly crashes on Earth ...

By this time, any reader of the story who has any respect for decent science fiction has gone for a Bromo. That's if he hasn't caught something else in reading between panels: an almost-satirical inanity. The intelligent energy, after all, lacks the standard, ready-made heroism; in fact, it's almost childlike. "The Brain!" it exclaims when it first sees the alien. "WOW!" The juvenility of the hero, the helplessness of the alien menace as his starship goes off course, the generally ridiculous design of the story ... all these things come together in the reader's mind, if it is receptive, to form something that is so highly "camp" that it's BEYOND camp: this is satire of a fine sort, a satirical view of mass-medium science fiction.

There's no doubt in my mind that kids will love this comic book. It's designed for a very young audience, an audience that won't know any better than to like it. But a few, more sophisticated and mature, readers will also read it — and see that it is both more and less

than it claims to be — and enjoy it, not in spite of its "badness", but because of it.

After reading Michael Girsdarsky's fulminations upon watching GENESIS II, I'm beginning to wonder if writer Nicola Cuti and artist Joe Staton haven't sniffed out the route of mass-medium sf for the future in E-Man. It's aimed low, after all, and it'll undoubtedly make it with the audience for which it's intended. Little kids, paging through each issue, might even be thinking, WOW! I watch Star Trek cartoons and read E-Man comics — I'm really serious about science fiction! Gosh-wowiel, echoing the acclaim — and awe, maybe — that always seems to issue from any audience when Star Trek or Genesis II or (fill in blank) Of the Planet Of The Apes flashes on a screen.

E-Man has an advantage over, say, Genesis II, though; it's non-toxic. It can't cause sf fans to scream, rant, rave or convulse. It's a supercampy kind of nonsense, and it probably wouldn't do the sf world any good, but at least it wouldn't vex and tax the rationality of people who care about good sf as it entertained the multitudes of the general public.

After all, science fiction will no longer be chic in a few years; when people once again forget about it, they'll turn to something else, and that's what you'll see on your tv screen. Right now, the rage seems to be 60-and 90-minute detectives, and a good many mystery fans are unhappy with the situation as Mr. Girsdarsky was over G-II. While science fiction is popular with the mass media, though, I (for one) would rather see something I could laugh about (rather than ulcerate over) while my friends and family are oohing and ahing.

E-Man may well be the sf comic book of the future. I hope so; at least it'd be better than the quasi-sf television shows, comic books, movies, etc. which insist on appearing from time to time.

Frank J. Hayes, III
Hayes House
Moline, Ill.

E-Man's artist is the same Joe Staton whose work appears regularly in these pages (Fantastic Stories) and on the cover of our September, 1973, issue ...